



# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

## THESIS

**TAKING THE LEAD IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF A NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE  
OFFICER**

by

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December 2012

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**TAKING THE LEAD IN PROFESSIONAL GROWTH: THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
A NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE OFFICER**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis analyzes intelligence support to NATO Special Operations and the training that facilitates this capability and recommends a model to increase competence in the field of intelligence. The training provided by the NSTEP has led NATO SOF intelligence personnel to fill critical positions that have afforded operational elements to execute missions. The successes of ISAF SOF have been attributed to the skilled analysts that have developed clear pictures of the enemy threat and the analysis of raw information. These skill sets are critical to ensure that the commander's guidance is met and the gaps answered for the operational elements.

The steps taken by the NSHQ to meet the need for skilled intelligence professionals have been pivotal to the growth of the NSTEP schoolhouse's course curriculum. Additionally, increased accesses to ISR assets and interactions with other intelligence agencies have levied added responsibilities on NATO SOF intelligence officers to become more knowledgeable about multi-disciplinary intelligence operations. This requirement forces NATO SOF intelligence officers to become experts in multiple fields. This access enables these officers to seek out additional training to meet these needs. To ensure these requirements are met, does NSHQ need to develop a curriculum that provides management training for intelligence officers to meet the need of overseeing multisource intelligence elements?

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

BICES	Battlefield Information, Collection, and Exploitation System
CJFSOCC	Combined Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command
DA	Direct Action
FID	Foreign Internal Defense
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
ISAF	International Service and Assistance Force
MICCC	Military Intelligence Captain Career Course
MICO	Military Intelligence Company
MID	Military Intelligence Detachment
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NIC	National Intelligence Cell
NSCC	NATO SOF Coordination Center
NSHQ	NATO SOF Headquarters
NSTEP	NATO SOF Training and Education Program
ODA	Operational Detachment-Alpha
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SOFFC	(ISAF) SOF Fusion Cell
SOIB	Special Operations Intelligence Branch
SOTG	Special Operations Task Group
SOTU	Special Operations Task Unit
TPP	Tactics, Training, and Procedures

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## I. INTRODUCTION

We will continue to maintain the capacity to defend our allies against old and new threats. We will also continue to closely consult with our allies as well as newly emerging partners and organizations so that we revitalize and expand our cooperation to achieve common objectives. And we will continue to mutually benefit from the collective security provided by strong alliances.

—President Barack Obama<sup>1</sup>

### A. OVERVIEW

Since the beginning of the coalition operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, the importance of intelligence has not only enhanced intelligence sharing among the allied militaries, but has also exposed the need for further improvements. Joint and combined staffs have been routinely placed into positions of providing targeting data, planning, and leading collection efforts for multinational operations. These intelligence sections and personnel have been tasked to provide direct support to the operations of their organizations, and, on occasion, have been integrated into combined staffs to support units from different countries. When this integration occurs, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) must be synchronized to ensure mission success. This synchronization can require intelligence personnel to modify, learn on the job, or attend specific training prior to deploying into theater. On occasion, these intelligence officers have been newly assigned into positions without having the basic intelligence skill sets to fulfill their duties. When situations like this occur, on the job training can limit the effectiveness of the unit's operations.

When officers are reassigned to new positions, the assignment is based on the required professional progression of the officer. Additionally, these new duty positions might be assigned prior to formalized training and education.

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<sup>1</sup> Barack Obama, "The National Security Strategy," Washington, DC, 2012, 41, [http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss\\_viewer/national\\_security\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/national_security_strategy.pdf), (accessed 18 September 2012).

When this occurs, the effectiveness of the staff officer is diminished, leading to decreased productivity. If integrated into a multinational staff or organization, this officer will likely be assigned to positions typically reserved for more junior ranks. Due to the supervisory requirements of filling the position of a staff intelligence officer, the lack of training and experience could place these individuals into positions of an analyst in lieu of a “manager.” Their limited access to receive early and mid-career formalized training prior to their assignments to staff intelligence officer billets or deployments have placed them at a disadvantage.<sup>2</sup> A specialized curriculum for all newly assigned staff intelligence officers would eliminate the need for short term courses and would enhance the tactical skillsets of these intelligence personnel.

## B. BACKGROUND

Developing partner capabilities is inherent to U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF), but typically focuses on the tactical, team, and individual tasks. Foreign Internal Defense (FID) is the vehicle utilized by USSOF as a platform to develop partner capacity and enhance domestic issues and concerns or establish interoperability among the SOF communities. These FID engagements conducted by USSOF may include, in addition to the tactical tasks, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement assistance authorized by the Department of State (DOS) and administered by the DoD.<sup>3</sup> In some instances when FID engagements expand to mission planning, this may be the first opportunity in which some staff officers are exposed to the staff intelligence and operational process. Reasons may vary among the militaries of different NATO SOF

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<sup>2</sup> This is not an issue found in all SOF units, but is primarily associated with the newly established SOF organizations of NATO countries that are still developing the support staff to facilitate operations. Some of these shortcomings have been mitigated by deploying National Intelligence Cells (NICs) to provide the tactical intelligence needs for the SOF task groups.

<sup>3</sup> Field Manual (FM) 3-05.2-Foreign Internal Defense, 1-2. ARSOF Soldiers are uniquely qualified to advise their HN counterparts and trainees on how best to approach regional or transnational rivalries or how to deal with outside pressures from potential transnational spoilers. Historically, because of some similarities between the TTP used to conduct FID and those used to conduct other ARSOF core activities, there has been confusion and incorrect usage of the term. FID involves the support of a standing government and its lawful military and paramilitary forces.

countries for limited formalized training opportunities for staff intelligence officers, such as funding, seat allocation, and deployment cycles.<sup>4</sup>

A limited opportunity to attend domestic formalized intelligence training is a reality in the current system. Most NATO countries provide even less training opportunities to their SOF intelligence officers prior to assuming their positions.<sup>5</sup> Education such as this is critical when supporting operations in a deployed environment. In the fall of 2008, the NATO SOF Coordination Center (NSCC) identified the need to establish an ISAF SOF intelligence organization. This organization would be able to provide key information and analysis to the multiple ISAF SOF task forces operating in the Afghanistan Theater. Part of this development required the NSCC to create a short-term training regime that would prepare NATO SOF analysts prior to their deployment to Afghanistan. The first course developed was the NATO SOF Intelligence Course (NSIC), a thirty day, resident classroom instruction that focused on analyst level skills associated with targeting and target development. Later in 2009, the NSCC developed the NATO SOF Advanced Intelligence Course, which increased the analyst's capability by providing training on the use of Biometrics, threat finance, Document and Media Exploitation (DOMEX), and IED TTPs.<sup>6</sup>

### C. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The scope of this research is to examine the existing formalized domestic training that is currently provided to NATO SOF staff intelligence officers that

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<sup>4</sup> This researcher has experienced this issue during deployments to Afghanistan and during NATO exercises with NATO SOF intelligence staff officers. Most staff intelligence officers encountered had received on the job training and / or attended a basic intelligence course at NSHQ prior to or shortly after assuming their duty position.

<sup>5</sup> This statement is based on survey results (to be discussed later in this document) and the author's experience working with NATO SOF intelligence officers during previous assignments and deployments.

<sup>6</sup> The NATO SOF Training and Education Program has further developed courses that complement the analyst's capability down range, but has not developed a "manager's" course to oversee all intelligence functions at the unit level. The current agenda for training and the training calendar can be accessed on the NATO SOF Headquarters NSTEP website, <http://www.nshq.nato.int/NSTEP/>.

focus on the key mission sets of Special Reconnaissance (SR), Direct Action (DA), and Military Assistance (MA). Additionally, this research will attempt to display how NSHQ's NSTEP model and how the curriculum facilitates existing training and experiences. NSHQ can expand and capitalize on midcareer staff intelligence officer training by providing experiences for these officers. This examination will identify any key gaps within the internal and external training and development of SOF intelligence staff officers and will provide a roadmap to enhance the capability to support internal SOF missions during times of crises.

As depicted in Figure 1, NATO has identified a framework for the dissemination of information from theater, national sources, and agencies to the operational units conducting operations. Although this figure illustrates all elements that can be in theater, not all of them are necessary for SOF to conduct operations. Within this thesis, the author will examine what components that comprise the intelligence support elements, primarily at the Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) and Special Operations Task Unit (SOTU) level.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The size of a SOTG can vary, but is roughly defined as a headquarters that possesses all staff functions and commands and controls at least two SOTUs. A SOTU is defined as a special operations team comprised of 8–15 members.

## INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO NATO SOF OPERATIONS

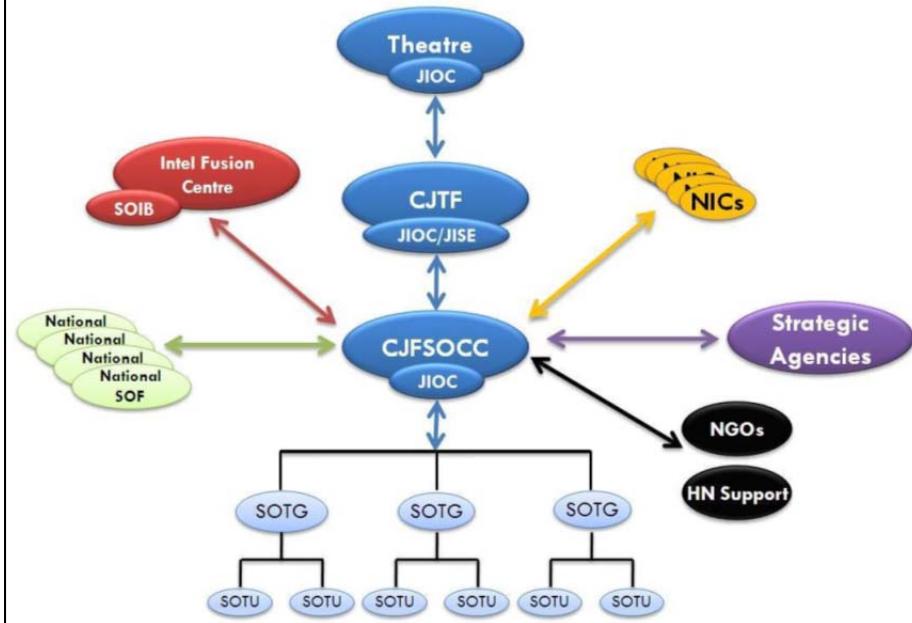


Figure 1. Intelligence Support Flow<sup>8</sup>

### D. RESEARCH QUESTION

In order to establish interoperability among intelligence officers from different countries, they must receive similar training. This research will attempt to answer the question, "Does NSHQ need a resident NATO SOF Staff Intelligence Officer's course to increase the management capability for multi-discipline intelligence operations?" Although any type of training is beneficial, this training environment must attempt to meet the needs for all intelligence officers supporting ISAF operations, to include regional and domestic SOF requirements in the future. In some instances, this might be the only formalized training that some intelligence staff officers receive for the mission.

The intent of this research will not focus solely on the limited domestic training opportunities, but rather emphasize a standardized curriculum that

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<sup>8</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO Special Operations Coordination Center, SOTG Manual, Version 1, 11 December 2009, 6–2.

provides a common framework of intelligence tasks that best support the inherent SOF missions of SR, DA, MA as annotated in STANAG 2555-Intelligence Training.<sup>9</sup> Next, this research will attempt to illuminate the existing system within some of the NATO SOF partner's domestic training pipelines, the availability afforded to NATO SOF organizations, and the assignment criteria to staff intelligence positions.

## E. RELEVANT AND CONCEPTUAL LITERATURE

Unclassified literature regarding the training of NATO SOF Intelligence professionals is very limited. For this thesis, the author will draw on NATO doctrine and publications, mission analysis briefs and CONOPs, the training curriculum at the NSTEP, and the input from the survey data and the author's previous experiences serving with NATO SOF.

Global economic crises are currently forcing countries to reduce spending and better manage their fiscal budgets. One area that is typically affected is the military. Reducing military budgets leads to diminished research and development. Acquisitions receive less freedom of spending, troop reduction is forced, and limiting initial entry is exercised. Education and training time is reduced at all levels as well. These measures force the need of future cooperation and coalitions to reduce the strain and burden on a single country's military and budget. On 5 January 2012, President Barack Obama stated that the "future downsized U.S. military would need to look beyond the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan to forge ahead, strengthening and relying on the capabilities of partnerships."<sup>10</sup> This vision not only depends on established and new relationships with partner militaries, but the interoperability that is achieved by common competencies when operating in a multinational environment. Gates

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<sup>9</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] NATO Standardization Agency [NSA]. "Standardized Agreement (STANAG) 2555-Intelligence Training," 2011, 1.

<sup>10</sup> Barack Obama, Strategic Defense Review press conference, 5 January 2012, <http://www.theatlanticwire.com/politics/2012/01/live-obama-speaking-defense-cuts/47030/> (assessed 8 February 2012).

states “SOF interoperability is networking, which describes methods employed to foster personal and professional collaborative relationships or communicate through technical means.”<sup>11</sup> The emphasis is focusing on is the technical communications that are associated with intelligence procedures and management. When these procedures and management become a seamless flow in the work environment, collection management, analysis, and production increases; facilitating the operator on the ground. Throughout multiple deployments and multinational exercises, this researcher has participated as a member, cell director, and observer/controller. This researcher witnessed firsthand the productivity of an integrated and synchronized intelligence section, possessing similar skills and capabilities and the dysfunctional sections that continued to struggle to manage internal functions.<sup>12</sup>

This synergy is only accomplished when there are common standards and TTPs that are practiced and exercised among the various military units, including intelligence professionals and their organizations. Currently, threats are becoming more transnational. These threats place more emphasis on collaboration regarding methods of engagements and intelligence sharing. The benefit of engaging these threats as a combined effort allows military organizations with regional and cultural expertise to have significant input. In situations where combined operations are the primary means to mitigate threats, the contributing militaries must be able to integrate their personnel without a break in tempo or capability. As these organizations combine their personnel, “their effectiveness and impact would be greater if they were interoperable and

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<sup>11</sup> Michael E. Gates, *Creating SOF Networks: the Role of NATO Special Operations as a Testing Ground for SOF Integration*, (Monterey: NPS Press, 2011), 20.

<sup>12</sup> This researcher has served in various capacities at the tactical and operational level during multiple NATO SOF exercises (Jackal Stone-10, Cold Response-08, 09), as the only U.S. observer/controller during Poland’s Delta-10 full spectrum intelligence exercise, deputy director for intelligence ISAF SOFFC, and multiple intelligence exchanges, bi-lats, mil-to-mil engagements, and partner assessments with NATO SOF organizations.

trained to common standards of excellence.”<sup>13</sup> When staffs have a shared level of education and capability, efficiency and effectiveness facilitate operations and planning processes.

The need to be able to collaborate effectively in a multinational environment is not a new concept and will likely be needed again in the future. In their thesis, Ara, Brand, and Larssen state the following:

By creating a standard intelligence skill set via the NSTEP, the units had a smaller gap in intelligence capability, which increased the credibility of forces. As the credibility of the forces increases, so does the trust. Other organizations trying to replicate NSHQ’s success should concentrate on capacity building across the force.<sup>14</sup>

The NSCC identified gaps in intelligence capability among NATO SOF intelligence personnel. As a result, they developed the NSTEP vehicle, which has produced competent SOF analysts. The NSTEP courses provide the immediate tools for the tactical analyst to support the operator on the ground, but these courses need to be expanded to cultivate the professional managers to oversee these processes. NATO SOF currently has the opportunity to not only provide the tactical analyst the tools needed to support his or her deployed task force, but also provides vital analysis to domestic contingencies. As the analyst becomes more capable in his/her abilities to solve problems and meet the commander’s intent, the need to establish a skilled staff intelligence officer becomes more vital to manage, train, and mentor the overall intelligence process for that SOF organization.

The courses provided by the NSTEP have served ISAF operations admirably. This education has increased the operational success of the overall SOF effectiveness in Afghanistan. The NSTEP courses have established a solid foundation for the deployed analysts and officers to the ISAF SOF Fusion Cell

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<sup>13</sup> David C. Gompert and Raymond C. Smith, *Creating a NATO Special Operations Force*, Defense Horizons, 2006, 54, 4–5.

<sup>14</sup> Martin J. Ara, Thomas Brand, and Brage Andreas Larssen, *Help a Brother Out: A Case Study in Multinational Intelligence Sharing*, NATO SOF (Monterey: NPS Press, 2011), 48.

(SOFFC) and their SOTGs; expanding their knowledge on the different aspects of targeting in a combat zone (i.e., non-kinetic target and its effects).<sup>15</sup> During the researcher's deployment to the SOFFC, analysts that had not completed the NSIC were immediately faced with the disadvantage of working with unfamiliar software and research tools taught during the course. This shortcoming was evident in the analysis and production of the analyst.<sup>16</sup>

Timely and accurate intelligence is the most critical aspect for successful operations on the battlefield. Without the relevant enemy and environmental information, the maneuver elements operate in the blind. With the current emphasis on multinational operations, this burden on intelligence staffs to provide a clear threat picture and sound analysis is more vital than ever. Allied Join Publication (AJP)-2 states that:

The full impact of intelligence cannot be effectively applied unless both the intelligence itself and the information from which it is derived can be shared. Interoperability, in this case the ability to exchange information and intelligence, is the key to successful multinational operations.<sup>17</sup>

The intelligence staff officer and his or her staff must be able to not only effectively analyze information, but must also develop products and assessments. The will enable the officer to share this analysis and production, both vertically and horizontally to units and staffs that can operationalize this

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<sup>15</sup> During the author's deployment to SOFFC, increased emphasis was placed on stressing and disrupting the financial networks and other non-kinetic lines of operation resulting in isolating funding to insurgent activity.

<sup>16</sup> The learning objective for the NSIC establishes a NATO SOF standard for intelligence development for forces deployed in support of NATO missions. NSHQ, "NATO SOF Training and Educational Program (NSTEP)," <http://www.nshq.nato.int/NSTEP/>. During the researcher's deployment, two analysts working in the SOFFC and multiple analysts imbedded with some of the task groups did not attend the NSIC. This lack of training hindered the communication between the SOFFC analysts and the task group analysts, as well as meeting the intent of the task group commander and the regional command (RC) and operation effectiveness. Although missions were successful against targets, the process of focusing on the removal leadership outweighed than the focus of disrupting or degrading the network as a whole.

<sup>17</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization AJP-2 "Allied Joint Intelligence, Counterintelligence and Security Doctrine P 2," 2003, 1-1-1.

information. In a multinational environment, common intelligence practices and TTPs are essential during the exchange of information is conducted.

In 2008, the NATO SOF Coordination Center (NSCC) conducted a study to examine broad trend in SOF structure, organization, capabilities, interoperability, and resourcing. This study represented a compilation of research and analysis intended to provide a reference point to inform the continued optimization of national and NATO SOF.<sup>18</sup> As a result of this study, a determination was made that SOF Intelligence would be needed to understand more complex and culturally diverse adversaries. This demanded more sophisticated products and enhanced interdepartmental and interagency cooperation.<sup>19</sup> This need for intelligence capability and synergy requires operational experience and formalized training. The next chapter will examine the composition of intelligence support elements for SOF organizations. This section will provide the models that the U.S. Army Special Forces, Rangers, and NATO SOF use to achieve an intelligence picture to support operations.

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<sup>18</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operation Coordination Center, “The NATO SOF Special Operations Forces Study,” 2008.

<sup>19</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization Special Operation Coordination Center, “The NATO SOF Special Operations Forces Study,” 2008, Appendix 7.

## II. INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO SOF

Special operations are normally planned in considerable detail, and SOF relies on accurate, current intelligence to ensure that plans meet precisely the situation in the intended target area. Access to timely, detailed, tailored, and fused all-source intelligence is essential for a successful operation.

—AJP 3.5<sup>20</sup>

### A. WHY IS SOF INTELLIGENCE IS DIFFERENT

This chapter will outline special operations and the intelligence elements that support their missions. The following pages will additionally cover the types of missions conducted by SOF and the intelligence needed to provide success. Both conventional military and SOF need timely, accurate, multi-source intelligence to support operations. However, the nature of some SOF operations requires a more precise, delicate, and sometimes non-military focus to facilitate the nature of their operations. Congress, the National Command Authority, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff have mandated nine primary missions for Army SOF (ARSOF) to execute during peacetime and war.<sup>21</sup> Of these operations, ranging from pre-conflict to major theater of war (MTW) and SOF elements need additional information in order provide engagement and targeting strategies that are executed by conventional forces. These operations are conducted to set conditions in potential areas of conflict, develop internal security forces to defend their homeland and even conduct deep strike operations against a foe's strategic centers of gravity.

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<sup>20</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization AJP-3.5 “Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations,” 2009, 1–4.

<sup>21</sup> Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-05.102. Army Special Operations Forces Intelligence* 2001, 1–15. These nine missions are: Unconventional Warfare, Direct Action, Special Reconnaissance, Foreign Internal Defense, Combating Terrorism, Psychological Operations, Civil Affairs, Counter Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and Information Operations.

Special Operations are described as military activities conducted by specially designated, organized, trained, and equipped forces using operational tactics, techniques, and modes of employment not standard to conventional forces. These activities are conducted across the spectrum of conflict independently, integrated with, or in coordination with operations of conventional forces to achieve political, military, informational, and economic objectives. Politico-military considerations may require low prominence, covert or discreet techniques, and the acceptance of a degree of physical and political risk not associated with conventional operations.<sup>22</sup>

Doctrine claims that the sensitive nature of SOF operations requires the need for enhanced intelligence based on three factors: level of detail, timeliness and accuracy of information, and operational element and analyst interface.<sup>23</sup> When SOF elements conduct operations, the composition of the element is typically smaller in numbers, placing the unit at a disadvantage against the enemy. The level of detail and the accuracy of the intelligence provided are critical elements in order to mitigate the threat posed by enemy forces. Additionally, the sensitivity of the targets, the quick strike capability, and the intelligence gleaned from SOF operations, forces the intelligence and the operations team to work more closely together. This ability to collaborate operations and intelligence is essential for successful operations. When conducting operations during a pre-conflict engagement, the information provided to SOF elements delivers the needed aspects of cultural and political factors needed to succeed in their operations.

## B. THE FOCUS OF INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT

SOF units conduct many types of operations ranging from times of peace to state-on-state conflicts. AJP 3.5 explains this spectrum of conflict over four

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<sup>22</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization AJP-3.5 “Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations,” 2009, 1–1.

<sup>23</sup> Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-05.102. Army Special Operations Forces Intelligence* 2001, 2–5.

phases: Peacetime Military Engagement, Peace Support Operations, Counter Irregular Threat Operations, and Major Combat Operations.<sup>24</sup> During peacetime engagements, SOF is a vital vehicle to develop interoperability among the different militaries, enhanced cooperation, conduct of capabilities, and execution of intelligence exchanges.

During the next three phases of conflict, SOF may be called on to conduct the three primary missions of Special Reconnaissance (SR), Direct Action (DA), and Military Assistance (MA). Understanding the threat, the political and physical environment, and cultural atmospherics are factors that intelligence must attempt to satisfy during the planning and execution of SOF operations. According to McRaven, “good intelligence is needed to develop a simple plan. Good intelligence simplifies a plan by reducing the unknown factors and the number of variables that must be considered.”<sup>25</sup> As stated before, the understanding that provided by intelligence allows the operators to conduct missions with less risk and higher chances for success.

## C. THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF U.S. SOF INTELLIGENCE

### 1. U.S. Special Forces

U.S. Special Forces intelligence support is divided into two main entities; the battalion S2 section and the Military Intelligence Detachment (MID) (see Figure 2). These two organizations provide the SFODAs and the staff the critical support that facilitates operations and day-to-day activities. The battalion S2 section is the overall director for managing all intelligence operations, production, and dissemination for the unit. Similar to the NATO SOF structure, the SF

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<sup>24</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization AJP-3.5 “Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations,” 2009, 1–2, 1–3.

<sup>25</sup> McRaven, W., *Spec Ops: Case Studies in Special Operations Warfare*, 1995, 12.

battalion S2 section is comprised of three personnel; a captain, senior NCO, and a CI sergeant. This management section can be modified based on the nature of deployment.<sup>26</sup>

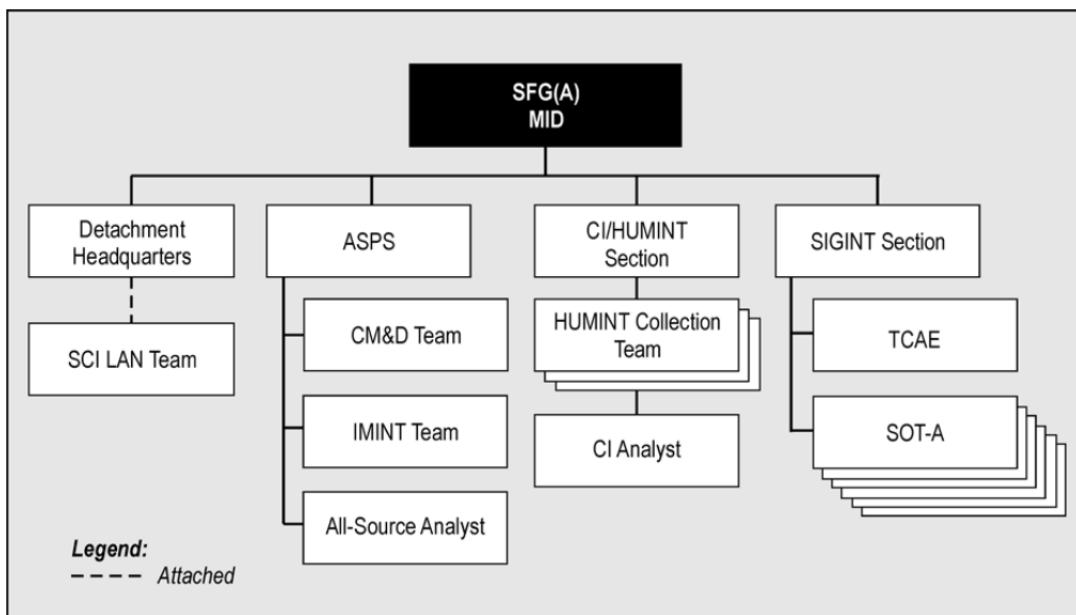


Figure 2. Special Forces Group MID<sup>27</sup>

This relatively small section, even if modified, is not able to support the battalion's intelligence requirements alone. The SF battalion's MID provides the tactical tools and capabilities needed to collect, exploit, and produce the intelligence products needed to the operators. An SF battalion MID is comprised of 32 personnel, providing all source, CI/HUMINT, and SIGINT support. The MID can be deployed in its entirety or split based on mission requirements and intelligence needs. Having the MID provides the S2 the means to determine the best tools and assets needed to answer the commander's requirements.

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<sup>26</sup> U.S. Army Field Management Support Agency, 2012. The USAFMS provides the MTOE breakdown of all U.S. Army organizations. Although this table is based on unit requirements and missions, deployments can influence actual personnel numbers and skill sets needed.

<sup>27</sup> Army Field Manual 3–05.102. Army Special Operations Forces Intelligence.

## **2. U.S. Army Rangers**

Similar to the U.S. Special Forces battalions, U.S. Army Ranger battalion S2 sections serve as management cells for supporting intelligence assets, but possess more analytical capability. The Ranger S2 section contains up to eight personnel, providing all source analysis to operations. Like the MID model, the Ranger Special Troops Battalion (STB) provides an enhanced intelligence company (MICO). This company provides multi-source, tactical intelligence to deployed Ranger task forces. This company's capabilities and functions range from collection management and dissemination to all source production, CI/HUMINT, tactical SIGINT support, terrain analysis, and tactical UAV.<sup>28</sup>

## **3. How SOF Intelligence Supports Operations**

Although the organic intelligence section at the battalion/SOTG level can provide analysis, collection management, and production, the additional support provided by the Special Forces MID and the Ranger MICO adds critical capabilities. Tailoring deployed intelligence sections allows the commander to have access to multisource intelligence, allowing for better corroboration and clarity to the environment. As previously stated, elements of the MID and MICO can deploy completely or be portioned out based on the mission requirements.

When this element deploys, these modified sections can easily form fusion cells. These cells are capable of collaborating multisource intelligence from higher and adjacent headquarters, with information collected from subordinate teams. Typically, fusion cells are located at the brigade level or above, but the assets and capabilities provided by the MIDs and MCOS replicate these functions. The nature of the fusion cells is communicating with other intelligence

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<sup>28</sup> U.S. Army Field Management Support Agency, 2012. This MICO provides deployed Ranger TF's greater organic support without reaching out to additional agencies for various intelligence disciplines. The MICO can deploy special intelligence packages based on mission sets and requirements.

organizations, Inter Agency partners (IA), and Other Government Agencies (OGA) allowing for cooperation and information flow between units.<sup>29</sup>

## D. THE NATO SOF MODEL

### 1. NATO SOTG Intelligence Structure

The Special Operations Task Group (SOTG) is the lowest level of a tactical SOF organization with full functioning S1-S6 staff functions. These dedicated staff sections provide the SOTG commander with the necessary decision making information needed to execute the mission. The S2 section for a SOTG is the first level of a multi-intelligence discipline section. It has the ability to conduct intelligence operations independently. The NSCC's SOTG Manual states the intelligence section is the primary center that serves the COM SOTG, the S2, the SOTG staff, and the Special Operations Task Units (SOTU) for all intelligence requirements.<sup>30</sup> Although these sections can be task organized differently based on the mission requirements, the S2 section should always have analysis, production, and collection management capabilities. Based on the SOTG's mission and commander's requirements, the S2 section can have the additional functions of HUMINT/Counter-Intelligence oversight (J2X) and UAV controllers. Table 1 provides a basic S2 section components necessary to provide the SOTG the needed information to facilitate decision making and operations.

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<sup>29</sup> Lushenko, P. "Partnership 'Till it Hurts" The Use of Fusion Cells to Establish Unity of Effort Between SOF (*Yin*) and Conventional Forces (*Yang*), 2010.

<sup>30</sup> NSCC, *SOTG Manual*, 2009, 6–4. This sample configuration allows the SOTG S2 to be able to provide analysis for the commander and staff and for the SOTU's, while still being able to push information higher. This staffing example would serve as a minimum manning layout and would be better served by augmentation of additional intelligence disciplines and analytical support.

TACTIC POSITION	RANK	BACK GROUND	SHIFT (D/N)
DIRECTOR (S2) / DISCLOSURE OFFICER	OF3/2	SOF	D/N
ALL-SOURCE NCO/ COLLECTION MANAGER	OR8/7	SOF	D/N
HUMINT OFFICER	OF2		
CI/ DETENTION NCO	OR8/7		
UAV ANALYST	OR7/6		
INTERPRETER			

Table 1. Example of SOTG S2 Structure (From NSCC SOTG Manual, 2009)

Table 1 provides a guideline for battalion (SOTG) S2 sections. Unit commanders can require staff intelligence officers to modify this structure to best support the mission. Based on these mission requirements, deployment areas, or additional support assets available, certain positions can be replaced by additional analysts or collectors. Within some organizations, tactical UAVs are used not to exploit, but rather to assist current operations at the team (SOTU) level, thereby eliminating the need for the UAV analyst position at the SOTG.

## 2. Additional Support to NATO SOF Intelligence

NATO SOF organizations typically do not possess a MID or MICO that directly supports special operations. The additional support needed to facilitate the necessary intelligence requirements. Increasing the size of the SOTG intelligence section or from a formalized National Intelligence Support Team (NIST) provides the necessary support to operations. This NIST provides critical reach back for the SOTG, to national intelligence agencies. Kristofferson argues that the NIST will provide the SOTG intelligence section the needed support with “Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield (IPB) products, the targeting process,

the handling of intelligence agreements (bilateral or multilateral), providing liaison-personnel to inter-agencies, and providing a reach-back to the nation's own intelligence service.”<sup>31</sup>

This reach-back capability provides the SOTG intelligence section the ability to receive operational and strategic intelligence assessments, while focusing on the tactical tasks. With minimal staffing, the intelligence section calls on the NIST for additional support resulting in timely intelligence to the commander, staff, and operational teams. Although this concept serves as a multiplier to NATO SOF organizations, not all deployed NATO SOF units have NIST support readily available.

### **3. ISAF SOF Fusion Cell**

During the early days of January 2009, the NSCC formally established the ISAF SOF Fusion Cell in Kabul to provide intelligence support to ISAF SOF SOTGs. This cell was organized to have the ability to reach out into the ISAF intelligence community and fuse multisource intelligence to support ISAF SOF operations in theater. The SOFFC was staffed by analysts, both officer and enlisted, that would directly support each SOTG, providing continuity and strength for this partnership. In most cases, the SOFFC analysts were provided by the SOTG intelligence section, thus maintaining this organic relationship. Figure 3 illustrates how the task force analysts are laid out in the SOFFC, as well as the additional intelligence support that this organization provides to the task forces.

However, this partnership is not always possible due to limits on deployment numbers placed on units and the need for maintaining sufficient numbers of personnel at the SOTG S2 section. In these cases, analysts are still assigned to support the SOTG, even though they might not be from the same country. This is still a successful means of support, but there are learning curves

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<sup>31</sup> Kristofferson, E., “A Requirement for a National Intelligence Support Team in Direct Support of Special Operations Forces Task Groups in Multinational Operations,” 2009.

on the parts of both the SOFFC analyst and the SOTG S2. Among these issues are language barriers, comprehension of the SOTG's TTP's, and full clarity of the commander's intent.

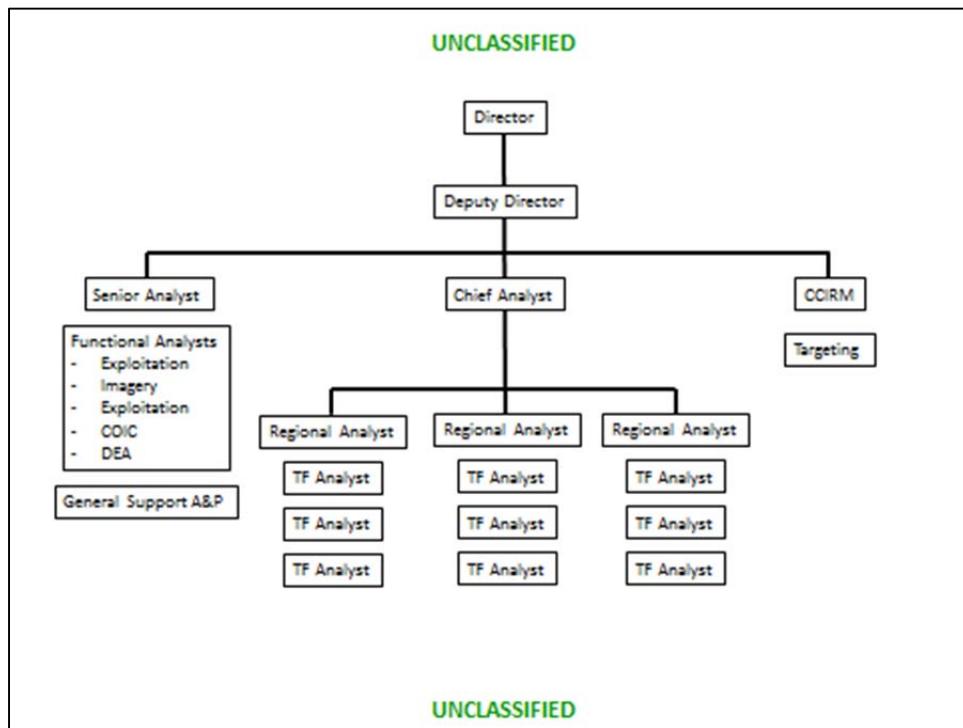


Figure 3. Generic Example of the SOFFC Organization  
(Produced by Author)

An additional benefit of the SOFFC is the location and proximity of the organization relative to the other intelligence agencies and commands. SOFFC analysts are able to conduct face-to-face engagements with “adjacent” SOTG's through their analyst. This is accomplished by providing deconfliction on threat reporting. This deconfliction is critical, as the enemy will not respect unit boundaries and will move freely across the battlefield. Also, the SOFFC is able to coordinate with theater level intelligence organizations that can provide additional reporting, collection, and analysis on their SOTG's area of operation.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the author explained in detail intelligence structures needed by SOF organizations in order to improve the chances of having successful missions. The battalion/SOTG level intelligence section and specialized units are the key elements that provide the teams and the staff with a clear picture of the battlefield. Although this section is able to conduct the needed analysis and production, their ability to coordinate with outside intelligence organizations is a major factor.

The next chapter focuses on the needs of the individual intelligence professional. This analysis will attempt to illustrate that the intelligence soldier is required to accomplish a multitude of tasks, while displaying the ability to conduct asymmetrical assessments. Additional explanation will be made regarding these requirements. Emphasis will be given to the impacts that different training environments and schooling would have on the missions of the intelligence soldiers.

### **III. NATO SOF, AFGHANISTAN, AND THE SOF FUSION CELL**

#### **A. BACKGROUND**

As of February 2006, NATO did not possess SOF capacity in Afghanistan. The nations that provided SOF units fell under the U.S. led Combined Joint Special Task Force-Afghanistan (CJSOTF-A).<sup>32</sup> As a result of operations with Afghanistan, ISAF SOF leadership quickly realized that NATO SOF lacked direct intelligence support that would enable it to be more effective on the ground. In early 2006, NATO SOF had two SOTGs conducting operations in support of the ISAF Commander while all other SOF components fell under the CJOSTF-A structure. In May 2006, an interim Special Operation Coordination Element (SOCE) was established to provide synchronization of operations for ISAF SOF. In July of that year, the SOCE was redesigned as the Special Operations Command and Control Element (SOCCE).<sup>33</sup>

In 2008, NATO SOF elements in Afghanistan had the ability to reach back to the SOCCE for support. However, the lack of a dedicated ISAF SOF intelligence cell remained an issue in providing a fused picture of the theater to the drive operations. In order to assist the SOTGs with the intelligence picture in Kabul, the SOCCE established the Kabul Effects Group (KEG). The primary focus for this cell focused on the activities and operations within the capital, not the entire theater.<sup>34</sup> This organization possessed a vision of integrating multiple intelligence agencies with the end state of collaborating and sharing intelligence.

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<sup>32</sup> NSCC, *ISAF SOF Assessment 2008: Report to SACEUR*, 15 MAY 2008. The Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), through the SHAPE Special Operations Office (SSOO) tasked the NATO Special Operations Coordination Center (NSCC) to assess SOF supporting NATO's ISAF in Afghanistan. This report documents that assessment and is intended to highlight progress made since February 2007 and to identify what support and enablers are required in the future, 3.

<sup>33</sup> NSCC, *ISAF SOF Assessment 2008*, 4.

<sup>34</sup> NSCC, *ISAF SOF Assessment 2008*, 7.

## B. THE INITIAL CONCEPT

Following the 2008 ISAF SOF Assessment, the need to further develop the intelligence capacity and sharing remained forefront to support operations. As a result of operations within Afghanistan, ISAF SOF leadership realized that NATO SOF lacked direct intelligence support that would enable it to be more effective on the ground.<sup>35</sup> In July 2008, the NSCC began mission analysis to develop an organization that would provide the needed intelligence support and the sharing and fusion of information to support the SOTGs. This concept was renamed the ISAF SOF Fusion Cell (SOFFC) and became a single location for the exchange of intelligence in order to support ISAF SOF operations in theater.<sup>36</sup> In early 2009, the SOFFC reached initial Operational Capacity (IOC) with minimum manning and equipment with the end state of reaching Full Operational Capacity (FOC) early 2010.<sup>37</sup>

With the concept of the SOFFC moving forward, the purpose of the organization had to become defined. The objectives for this organization had to be able to gather, fuse, share, and provide information and intelligence to the ISAF SOF units across the theater. Additionally, the analysts residing in the SOFFC had to serve as an extension of the SOTG, thus increasing the operational outputs of the task groups. Next, the SOFFC had to maximize information and resources. With an increasing number of allied and partner SOF elements operating throughout Afghanistan, the need for this fusion center to tap into the vast intelligence resources available from allied partners was clearly a requirement. Lastly, the SOFFC must have access to information and

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<sup>35</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] NATO SOF Headquarters [NSHQJ. "The Formation of the NSHQ Special Operations Component Command-Core." Mons, Belgium: 1 MAY 2012, 6.

<sup>36</sup> NSHQ. "CONOPS for Special Operations Forces Fusion Cell in Afghanistan." Mons, Belgium, 24 September 2012: 2.

<sup>37</sup> NSHQ. "CONOPS for Special Operations Forces Fusion Cell in Afghanistan." Mons, Belgium, 24 September 2012: 2.

intelligence from Troop Contributing Countries (TCN) non-military agencies, as well as from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIRoA) Intelligence agencies.<sup>38</sup>

Initially, the task of the SOFFC was to fuse multinational and multi-source intelligence to support NATO SOF operations across the Afghan theater.<sup>39</sup> The SOFFC was able to accomplish this due to the organization serving a direct support role to the SOTGs, having direct input and providing recommendations to targeting boards. Providing professional and developmental training and programs for its members is yet another way to accomplish the goal. Ara et al. write, "The SOFFC is focused on garnering information from a multitude of sources, fusing that information with operational requirements to produce, and then disseminate, actionable intelligence to NATO SOTGs in Afghanistan."<sup>40</sup> In order to achieve this, the SOFFC requires raw and analyzed information, coordination among various intelligence organizations, quality trained intelligence analysts, and acute quality control on products disseminated back to the SOTGs.

### C. MANNING

The SOFFC has grown considerably since its IOC. This growth occurs in more than just intelligence analysts, but also includes other government agencies that provide key expertise, such as counter IED analysis. In early 2009, the SOFFC stood up with a hand full of personnel that were provided on a voluntary basis. As of mid-2012, the SOFFC has grown almost eight times its original size with assigned personnel from over a dozen nations.<sup>41</sup>

The SOFFC is a unique entity that is manned by the stakeholders. There is neither a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) nor a Crisis Establishment

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<sup>38</sup> NSHQ. "CONOPS for Special Operations Forces Fusion Cell in Afghanistan." Mons, Belgium, 24 September 2012: 3.

<sup>39</sup> NSHQ. "CONOPS for Special Operations Forces Fusion Cell in Afghanistan." Mons, Belgium, 24 September 2012: 4.

<sup>40</sup> M., Ara, T. Brand, B., Larssen, "Help a Brother Out," 40.

<sup>41</sup> The contributing nations include both NATO and Non-NATO Allied nations.

(CE) structure that identifies long term manpower resourcing solutions. The NSHQ has the responsibility of engaging its stakeholders to ensure a steady manpower supple. Each participating nation provides specialized, highly trained personnel capable of carrying out the SOFFC mission. Participation by these nations helps to maintain the vital link between SOF intelligence entities and the various national intelligence support units operating in ISAF. The SOFFC relies on the participating nations to ensure that all positions are filled with qualified personnel. Should nation fail to provide this manpower, the SOFFC cannot be successful and provide the link to receive and provide quality intelligence data.<sup>42</sup>

#### D. TRAINING

Based on the results of the 2008 SOF Assessment, the need for developing competent intelligence professionals was identified as a critical. In early 2008, the NSTEP was providing two courses of instruction regarding NATO SOF: the Combined Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command (CJFSOCC) Staff Officers Course and the CJSFSOCC Planning and Operations Course. The focus of these courses was to provide overview and training on the SOF staff planning cycle, synchronization, battle tracking, and SOF C2 systems.<sup>43</sup>

In June 2008, the NSTEP developed the initial courses providing intelligence training that would prepare deploying NATO SOF personnel to the SOFFC. This intelligence training was developed to provide intelligence standards for SOF deployed in support of NATO missions. This initial training was broken down into three, three-week classes that covered the basics of intelligence, and then progressed to more advanced capabilities. The NATO SOF INTEL 101 course began with an introduction to basic intelligence analysis and the integration of INTEL software, along with an explanation of how the software

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<sup>42</sup> NSHQ. "CONOPS for Special Operations Forces Fusion Cell in Afghanistan." Mons, Belgium, 24 September 2012: C-1.

<sup>43</sup> NSCC, "NSTEP Overview Brief," April 2008, slides 7–8.

incorporates all of the intelligence disciplines. The intelligence and operational cycles were covered in-depth. The comprehensive nature of the course enabled those attending with little and or no intelligence or operational experience could grasp what it takes to complete an intelligence product as well as a NATO Target Intel Package (TIP).<sup>44</sup>

The NATO SOF INTEL 201 course began with a compressed overview of software along with the intelligence and operational cycles and other materials learned in the NSIC 101. NSIC 201 was to serve as the intermediate level of NATO SOF Intelligence production with a heavy focus on the use of software and navigation of the NATO SOF Network (BICES). The main objective of NSIC 201 is to produce actionable intelligence using all available intelligence from current operations in ISAF.<sup>45</sup> Finally, the NATO SOF INTEL 301 course provided a compressed overview of software along with the intelligence and operational cycles and other materials learned in the NSIC 101 and NSIC 201. NSIC 301 is the advanced level of NATO SOF Intelligence production with a heavy focus on the use of software and navigation of the NATO SOF Network (BICES).<sup>46</sup>

These three courses provided the initial intelligence training that would lead the NSTEP to develop additional classes. The expansion of the NSTEP has grown to meet the need of more than analyst training in support of ISAF SOF, but has created a foundation of core intelligence based disciplines that will provide the support for future NATO SOF requirements beyond ISAF. This thesis will cover the NSTEP curriculum and methodology in the next chapter.

## E. CHALLENGES

To this date, the SOFFC has provided key and critical support for ISAF SOF operations. This success has largely been due to the professional soldiers that staff this theater-focused organization. Once challenge that the SOFFC

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<sup>44</sup> NSCC, "Calling Letter for NATO SOF Intelligence Courses 101, 201, 301," June 2008, 10.

<sup>45</sup> NSCC, "Calling Letter for NATO SOF Intelligence Courses 101, 201, 301," June 2008, 11.

<sup>46</sup> NSCC, "Calling Letter for NATO SOF Intelligence Courses 101, 201, 301," June 2008, 13.

initially faced was working with multi-INT, multisource information in a multinational environment. Within this setting, the challenge of working through national caveats with troop contributing countries can create issues, especially with time sensitive targeting.

Additional challenges that the SOFFC has experienced is the assignment of newly credentialed intelligence analysts. Although these analysts have attended training at the NSTEP, their military background is not INTEL. During these situations, there are both positive and negative aspects. First, as a former operator, this analyst truly understands the critical information needed to execute an operation. On the other hand, lacking experience as an intelligence analyst limits aspects of critical thinking that intelligence professional learn over their career.

## F. CONCLUSION

This chapter provided key information about the growth of ISAF SOF and the SOFFC. The basis of the SOFFC grew out of a need to provide a focal point for intelligence support for all of NATO SOF and served as a requirement to formalize NSTEP training for deploying personnel. Although the SOTGs were able to reach back to the SOCCE, the SOCCE maintained a limited capability to fully support all intelligence needs across the theater. Additionally, this chapter offered a view on the initial curriculum of intelligence training provided to prepare analysts deploying to support ISAF SOF. These three courses set the beginnings of a NATO SOF campus that today provides training beyond intelligence centered instruction. This growth in training has enabled interoperability among NATO SOF and has facilitated a common framework for multinational operational needs.

In addition, this chapter attempted to shed light on the challenges that a newly established organization faces. These challenges are not exclusively for NATO SOF, but are experienced theater wide when operating in a multinational environment. There has been extensive research on the functional support to

units in the Afghan theater and how organizations overcome the challenges operating in this multinational environment. These challenges are common hurdles and must be addressed accordingly. The SOFFC, NSTEP, and NSHQ have provided remedies for these issues, which have, allow the SOFFC to continue to support the SOTGs. The next chapter will focus on the operational cycle the SOFFC analysts utilize to support operations: Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate (F3EA-D).

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## IV. THE NSTEP AND THE F3EA-D PROCESS

### A. BACKGROUND

NSHQ's NATO SOF Training and Education Program (NSTEP) has become the backbone of providing key education for deploying NATO SOF personnel to Afghanistan. The NSTEP began in 2007 to provide overview instruction of NATO SOF operations. Initially this was accomplished by providing two courses: the Combined Joint Forces Special Operations Component Command (CJFSOCC) Staff Officer's Course and the CJFOCC Planning and Operations Course. These two courses provided instruction for NATO SOF Staff Officers to staff and operate in a NATO SOF headquarters. The overview of these classes was to serve as a doctrinal basis for staff planning, synchronization, and battle tracking.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to the NATO SOF staff officer requirement, intelligence training was seen as a needed foundation to maintain success for ISAF SOF operations in Afghanistan. In 2008, the NSCC created a series of basic intelligence courses that would build on one another in efforts to prepare ISAF SOF intelligence personnel. These three courses were one week in length each and were based on the standing ISAF SOF intelligence needs of the task forces.

In 2011, STANAG 2554-Intelligence Training, identified the required topics of instruction in order to meet NATO's requirement for intelligence personnel that participating NATO nations must adopt in order to ensure a common approach to achieve interoperability at the highest level.<sup>48</sup> This STANAG identifies both the basic and the advanced requirements needed to fully support operations (Figure 4 and 5).

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<sup>47</sup> NSCC, "The NATO SOF Training & Education Program (NSTEP), 2007, slide 4.

<sup>48</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] NATO Standardization Agency [NSA]. "Standardized Agreement (STANAG) 2555-Intelligence Training," 2011, Annex C-1.

#### **BASIC INTELLIGENCE TRAINING PROGRAM**

As a minimum all personnel should be conversant with the following topics:
a. The organization of NATO (Political / Military Structures & Commands as relevant and applicable to intelligence)
b. NATO intelligence structures
c. NATO intelligence structures supporting NIC
d. The role of intelligence in conventional warfare, Counter-Insurgency and Counter-IED
e. The principles of NATO intelligence
f. The intelligence cycle as it is applied within NATO
g. Basic Intelligence procedures and methods:
h. SIGINT within NATO
i. HUMINT within NATO
j. IMINT within NATO
k. Geospatial support
l. Counter-Intelligence
m. Use of open source (OSINT) information
n. Tools, Intel Toolbox, Analyst Notebook, BICES, JOIIS, AOSS and NIWS
o. General NATO staff procedures and methods
p. Security procedures

Figure 4. STANAG 2555-Intelligence Training, 2011, Annex C-1

#### **ADVANCED INTELLIGENCE TRAINING PROGRAM**

As a minimum the following subjects are to be covered:
a. Intelligence Support to the Operational Planning and decision making Collection Coordination and Intelligence Requirement Management (CCIRM) process
b. Advanced Intelligence production (analysis, synthesis, structuring, hypothesis making and testing, model making, confidence assessment, logic, inference making, writing, briefing, system and human challenges)
c. Intelligence production management
d. Follow up of received reporting
e. Security of Information
f. Counter Intelligence
g. Counter Deception
h. Intelligence support to targeting
i. Intelligence Support to C-IED and Intelligence Support to Counter-Insurgency

Figure 5. STANAG 2555-Intelligence Training, 2011, Annex C-1

## **B. THE BEGINNING OF NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE TRAINING**

As covered in the previous chapter, the NSTEP intelligence-training curriculum began with the three-part NATO SOF Intelligence Courses. This

foundation provided the basics for non-intelligence, and limited trained personnel, to operate within ISAF SOF. This basic curriculum covered the needed tools that allowed the analysts to develop targets for the SOTGs, while providing overviews of analysis and critical thinking. As with any foundation, the NSTEP had to grow to meet future needs within ISAF SOF. These three courses began the development of an expanded curriculum that would grow into multiple blocks of instruction covering the multi-disciplines of intelligence.

### **C. THE NSTEP AND THE TRAINING THAT MEETS THE OPERATIONAL NEEDS**

The above-mentioned intelligence courses provided the initial foundation for what the NSTEP has developed into today. Not only has the NSTEP grown to meet the need of more than analyst training in support of ISAF SOF, but has created a foundation of core intelligence based disciplines that focuses on the support for future NATO SOF requirements beyond ISAF. The NSTEP now has developed nine intelligence-based courses that are scoped to meet the needs for ISAF deployments, but allow attendees to support their own SOF organizations. NSHQ has identified the skill sets needed for NATO SOF intelligence professionals to build on their career development.

In late 2011, the NSHQ J2, working closely with the NSHQ, began training directorate to refresh all of the intelligence training blocks and to address any capability gaps from the ISAF SOF Transition Plan. This organization attempted to add focus regarding NATO SOF's growing global interests.<sup>49</sup> As of today, the NSTEP has developed nine intelligence-focused courses that has provided, not only a foundation, but has enhanced functional capability for intelligence professionals.

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<sup>49</sup> NSHQ, "NSHQ J2, SOIB, and SOFFC: And the Formation of the NSHQ Special Operations Component Command," May 2012, 10.

Figure 6 illustrates the core intelligence courses in green. This chart shows how the classes emphasize current operations and utilize best practices to ensure solid training. With the growing number of courses, the NSTEP has developed a course block scheme to cultivate NATO SOF intelligence professionals. Within the first block, students are introduced to the basics of intelligence. This block is comprised of the NATO SOF Intelligence Course (NSIC) and the Technical Exploitation Operations (TEO) Course. The NSIC is the introductory analyst course that initially exposes students to analytical methodology, critical thinking, research techniques, and the tools necessary for supporting NATO SOF missions. The TEO course provides TTPs to both analysts and operators on the conduct of on-site collection and exploitation. Students in the course will gain valuable knowledge of the NATO SOF Tactical Exploitation Kit and will learn critical TTPs for handling host nation personnel.<sup>50</sup>

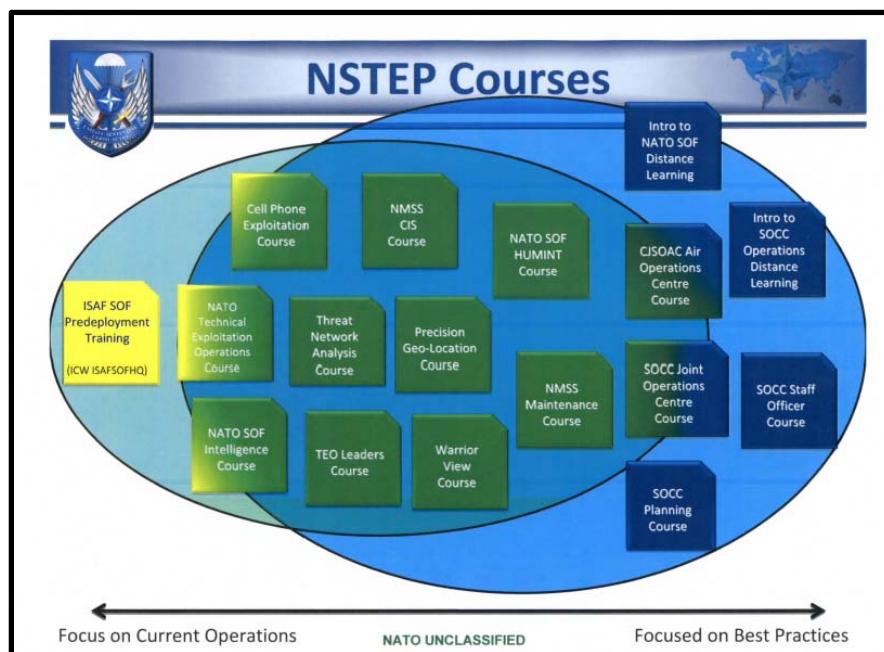


Figure 6. Current NSTEP Course Offerings<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> NSTEP Training Calendar, <http://www.nshq.nato.int/NSTEP/page/calendars/calendar/?ID=NSTEPTraining>.

<sup>51</sup> NSHQ, "Training and Readiness Overview," July 2012.

The intermediate phase, or block two, is also comprised of two classes: the Threat Network Analysis Course (TNAC) and the Forensic Exploitation Course (FEC). The TNAC is a seminar-based forum on the methodology of analyzing and understanding the facets of a threat network, drawing on current and historical events for explanation. The analysts attending this course will learn effective means to debilitate a network based on human and technological factors. This instruction additionally covers counter-threat finance, counter-IED analysis, and cultural and social network analysis.<sup>52</sup> The FEC provides the overview on the methodology associated with triaging and exploiting material found on operational objectives. Additionally, the students will learn the procedures to disseminate this information forward for further analysis.<sup>53</sup>

The final phase of the NSTEP's career development is the instruction of the "additional skillsets." This phase is focused on providing students with a more narrowed instruction of specific disciplines within the intelligence field.<sup>54</sup> The courses offered during this phase include the Warrior View Imagery Exploitation Course, the NATO SOF HUMINT Introductory Course, the NATO SOF Precision Geo-Location Familiarization Course, the Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) / Full Motion Video Seminar (FMV), and the Maritime Intelligence Course. These additional five courses allow the students, and their commands, to specialize and become better equipped in supporting operations. This specialization not only develops subject matter experts in these particular fields, but also increases the confidence of the students, allowing them to become interoperable in multinational environments.

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<sup>52</sup> NSTEP Training Calendar,  
<http://www.nshq.nato.int/NSTEP/page/calendars/calendar/?ID=NSTEPTraining>.

<sup>53</sup> NSHQ, "NSHQ J2, SOIB, and SOFFC: And the Formation of the NSHQ Special Operations Component Command," May 2012, 10.

<sup>54</sup> NSHQ, "NSHQ J2, SOIB, and SOFFC: And the Formation of the NSHQ Special Operations Component Command," May 2012, 10.

## D. THE F3EA-D PROCESS

The process that both the NSTEP uses to focus training and what the SOFFC uses to focus its intelligence efforts is the F3EA (Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate) model. This process is a circular and continuous procedure that is constantly being fed with new information, resulting with newly updated products being used by the SOTGs. For this process to be successful, it requires data collection, information sharing, skilled analysts, and sound quality control. The information that feeds the SOFFC comes in many forms and from numerous originators. Raw HUMINT reports, post operational debriefings, unevaluated imagery, and open source provides the analysts in the SOFFC the initial roadmap used to identify potential targets. This data feeds the Analyze, Find, and Fix blocks within the cycle. The analysts must understand the nature of the threat, the reliability of the reporting, and production of coherent intelligence assessments used to drive SOTG operations. Figure 7 is a graphical representation of how the process is executed.

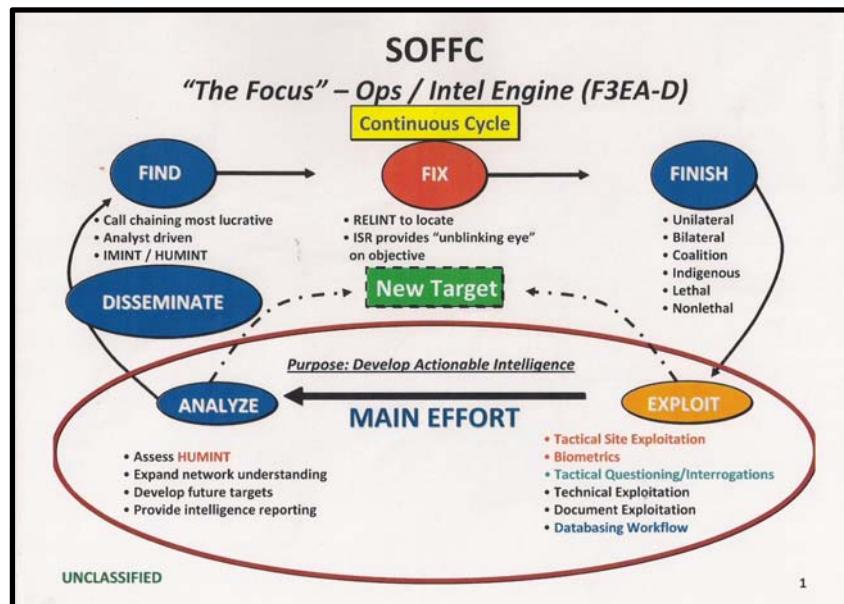


Figure 7. The SOFFC F3EA-D Process<sup>55</sup>

<sup>55</sup> SOFFC, *Way Ahead*, May 2011, slide 5.

As with other cycles in military planning, the F3EA-D is a continuous cycle that relies on the input of new information and analysis. The NSTEP has tailored its training to provide the necessary tools for the NATO SOF intelligence personnel to support all varieties of SOF operations. The Find phase provides a starting point for the intelligence and operations functions to identify targets within the battle space. Within this phase, the Warrior View, HUMINT, and the ISR/FMV courses teach students the methodologies and practices needed to develop targets.

As the information is processed, the Fix phase allows the intelligence to focus on locational data. This will allow the execution of operations. Ongoing ISR facilitates this cycle and is based on different intelligence disciplines. HUMINT, SIGINT, and IMINT allow the analysts to refine the information needed to execute the operation. Another term that is common during this phase is “trigger”; a signal that identifies the target can be serviced. This trigger can be derived from any of the intelligence disciplines and requires dedicated forces to conduct the operation when it meets the information threshold.

The Finish phase is operationally focused, but is crucial within this cycle. The post operational activities of this phase lead directly into the Exploit phase. This phase is critical as it provides new and updated information on the current target, as well as future, follow on targets. This not only includes exploiting materials from the objective, but conducting post operational debriefs and tactical questioning of detainees routinely fill in gaps of information requirements. The NSTEP has greatly increased SOF’s capabilities to support this phase through the FEC and TEO courses. The material and the exercises conducted allow those on site to gather raw information that feeds the later phases of this cycle.

In the view of the author, the next two phases, Analyze and Disseminate, are synonymous with one another. In other words, the analysis conducted during this phase leads to intelligence that drives future operations. Conducting further analysis of this intelligence is accomplished through dissemination to higher and adjacent organizations. This action allows for further analysis and collaboration

and further refining of key information concerning the threat. These two phases together acts to widen the aperture of the threat activity in the area and facilitate common perspectives on the battle space. Intelligence organizations can then provide output on the situation. The critical thinking, network analysis, and analytical methodologies taught in the NSIC and the TNAC provides students the tools to breakdown the threat and focus on disruption techniques.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

Providing an overview and background of the NSTEP, this chapter outlined how this organization has refocused its instruction over time. Relying on student and deployment feedback is crucial for ensuring that the latest TTPs and problem sets being experienced by NATO SOF are addressed in the classroom. Additionally, the author has provided the overview of the targeting methodology that, not only drives operations, but also has influenced training material and topics. This cycle does not have a starting point and never has an end. This is important to understand in that analysts need to continuously update information and seek additional tactics to disrupt threat networks.

The educational foundation provided by the NSTEP has afforded many NATO SOF intelligence personnel additional skill sets. For others, this training provides their first exposure to this discipline. Although the majority of the courses that are offered at the NSTEP are intelligence focused, many students that attend are not branched intelligence. These non-intelligence branched students attend this training for a variety of reasons, some due to their current or future assignments as SOTG intelligence staff officers or members. The next chapter will focus on survey-collected data from NSTEP students and instructors, both past and present. This chapter will look at the benefits of the training provided by the NSTEP and the potential gaps in host nation development of intelligence personnel.

## V. RESULTS AND DATA

### A. SURVEY RESULTS

#### 1. Demographics

The NATO SOF intelligence personnel survey consisted of 20 questions, administered over a four-month period. The target population for this survey was current and former students of the NSTEP training curriculum, NSHQ J2 personnel that maintained input in the training topics, and instructors that lead the training. The survey was sent out to 185 former and current students by e-mail and administered personally to personnel resulting in 33 completed surveys, or an 18% completion rate. The survey questions focused on five research areas: survey pool demographics, training, deployment history, personal capability assessment, and student assessments by NSTEP instructors.<sup>56</sup>

The survey sample that responded provided a wide range of ranks and years of military experience. The sample population consisted of 79% (27) officers, ranging from OF1 to OF5 and 21% (7) enlisted personnel, ranging from OR2 to OR9. The largest concentration from the survey was located in the OF3 rank (9). The years of service from the survey sample ranged from five years to greater than 20 years with the largest concentration residing in the more than 20 years at 42%, (14). The final demographic attribute surveyed was the military career path of the sample pool. The survey revealed that 85% of the sample was branched as an intelligence officer or analyst, 30% was a tactical leader / SOF operator, 12% serving as an operations officer, and 6% for transportation and signal support. The results total greater than 100% is due to respondents alternating duty assignments between operations and intelligence (Figure 8)

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<sup>56</sup> Due to sensitivity, country of service was not included in this survey.

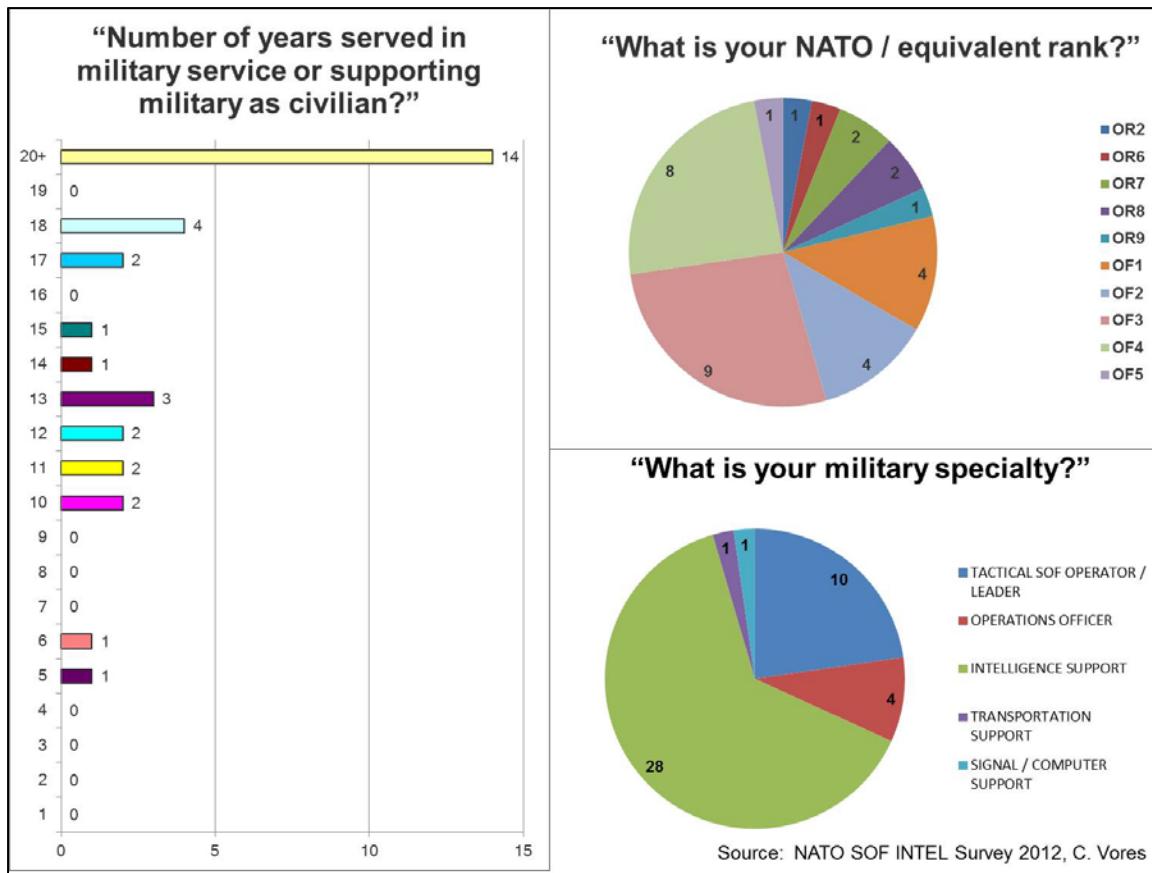


Figure 8. Survey Pool Demographics

## 2. Analysis of Demographics

The overall demographics of the survey pool indicate that a large number of students that attend training at the NSTEP are experienced soldiers and are in ranks that typically fill key leadership positions. Although there was a spread in student rank and years of service, NATO SOF organizations appear to be using the NSTEP as a foundation for the individual training of their personnel. Even though the NSTEP offers course covering disciplines other than intelligence, the survey pool largely consisted of intelligence personnel attending intelligence focused courses.

## B. DEPLOYMENT HISTORY

### 1. Overview of Operational Experience

The operational tempo of NATO militaries have increased over the past 11 years and have focused on counter terrorism, counter piracy, humanitarian assistance, and peace keeping operations. These operations have placed NATO SOF personnel in positions where enhanced skill sets and the need to operate in multi-national have become a standard for NATO operations. The summer of 1992 saw NATO's first major peace keeping operations in the Balkans where forces were charged to uphold a United Nations arms embargo on weapons in the Adriatic Sea.<sup>57</sup>

Since 2001, NATO has continued to contribute to peace and security operations that have ranged from NATO SOF's first counter terrorist operation following the events of September 11 to humanitarian assistance in support operations in Darfur, Sudan. These operations have shown the increased versatility of NATO capabilities and the need to increase interoperability during these categories of missions. Figure 9 illustrates how the survey pool has deployed and what types of operations they were involved in during these missions. Due to NATO SOF's commitment to Afghanistan, 69.7% of the respondents have participated in ISAF SOF operations. As covered in Chapters III and IV, the growth NSTEP training has been attributed largely due to ISAF SOF requirements.

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<sup>57</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]. "NATO Operations and Missions," (accessed 23 October, 2012, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics\\_52060.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_52060.htm)).

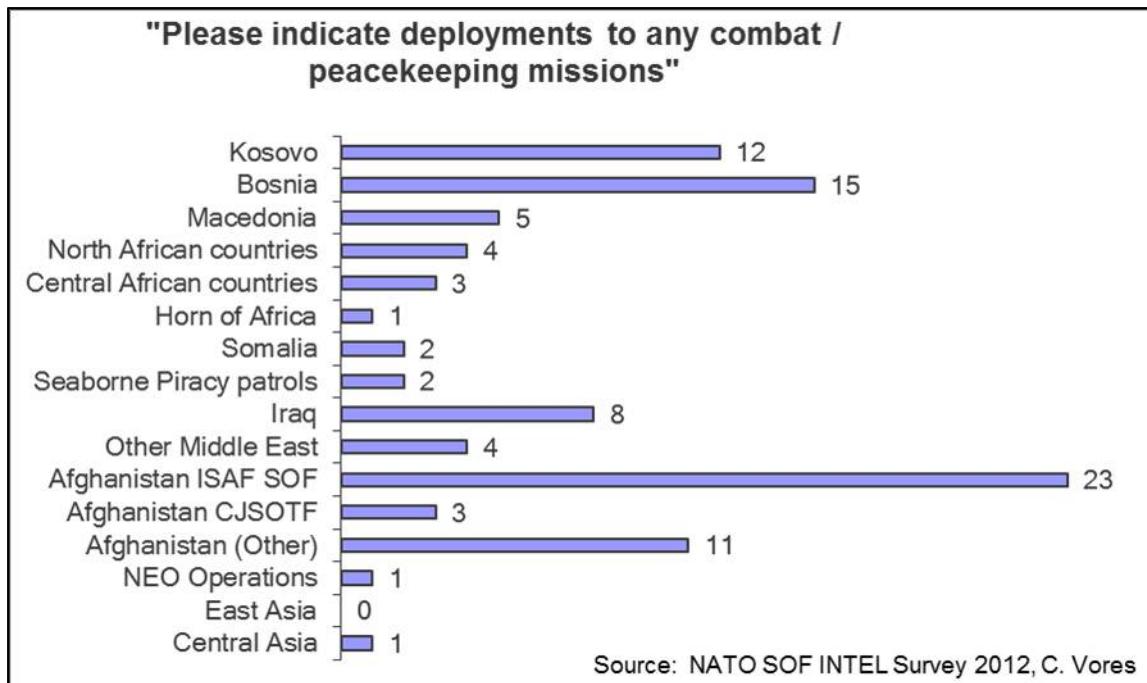


Figure 9. Survey Pool Deployment Experience

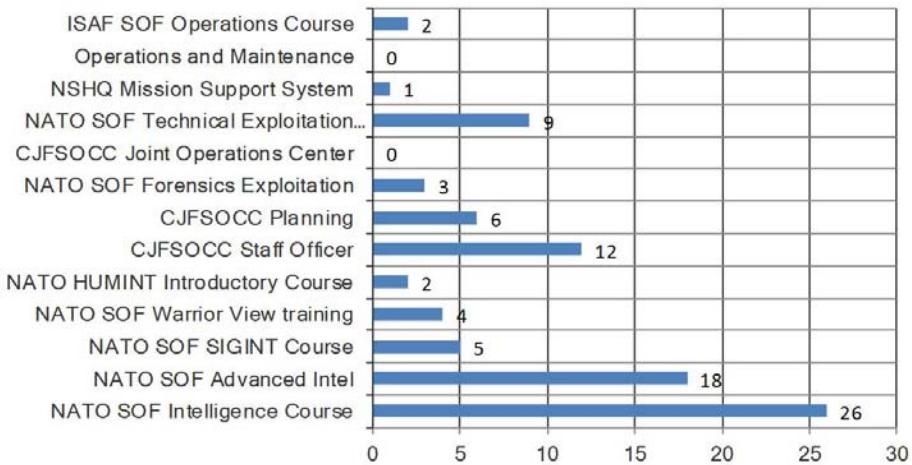
### C. ATTENDANCE IN NSTEP TRAINING COURSES

From 2008 to 2011, the NSTEP has graduated nearly 2500 students from their various courses and have projected another 1200 students in 2012.<sup>58</sup> Over the past four years, the NSTEP graduation rate has increased on average 27% each year and due to the need for increased interoperability and multi-national operations, the number of graduates is expected to climb.<sup>59</sup> Figure 10 provides the number of students, by course, who participated in this survey. Even though the NSTEP offers non-intelligence focused training, according to the respondents, the SOF Intelligence and the Advanced Intelligence courses was attended by the majority of the students.

<sup>58</sup> NSHQ, "Training and Readiness Overview," July 2012.

<sup>59</sup> NSHQ, "Training and Readiness Overview," July 2012

### **"What NSTEP courses have you attended?"**



Source: NATO SOF INTEL Survey 2012, C. Vores

Figure 10. NSTEP Courses Being Attended

#### **D. REASON FOR ATTENDING NSTEP TRAINING**

Figure 11 illustrates the breakdown of survey responses regarding NSTEP attendance. Although this survey question was not focused solely on the intelligence focused courses being offered, the responses indicate that 40% use these courses to prepare for upcoming deployments. This high number could be argued to reflect the relevance of the material being taught and the validity that the NATO SOF community sees in this program. This endorsement of the NSTEP is evident when looking at the total responses regarding attendance.

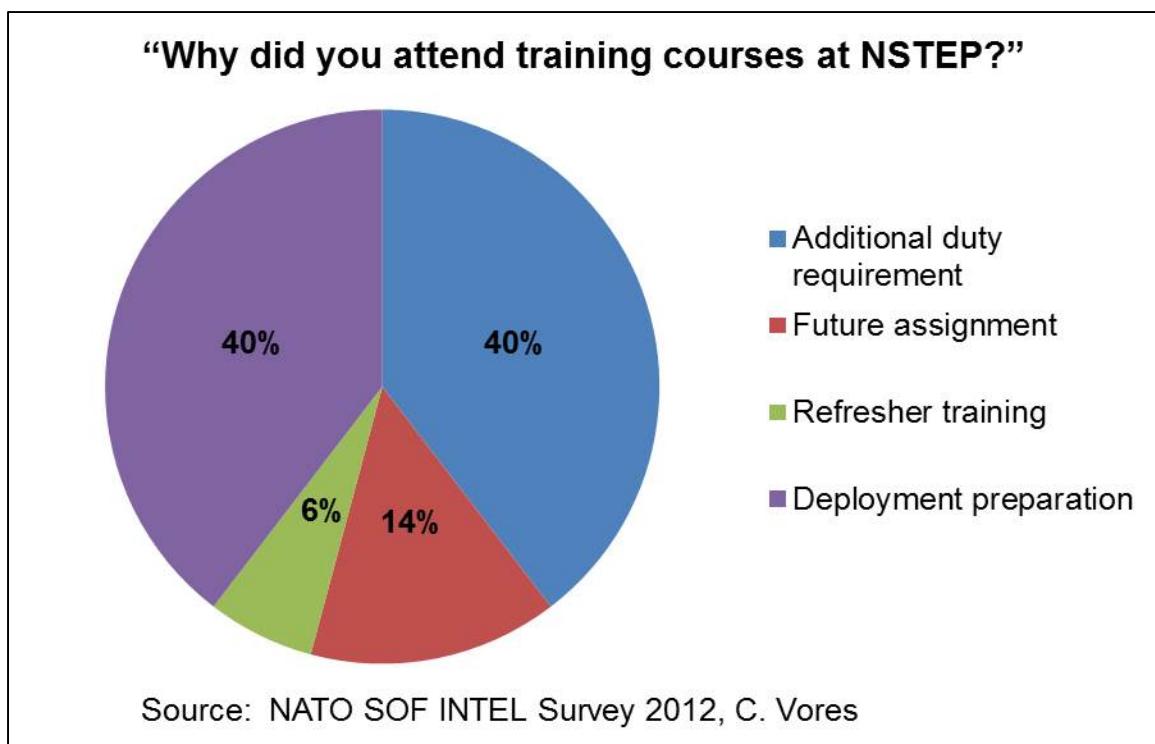


Figure 11. Reason for Attending Training at the NSTEP

#### **E. PERSONAL ASSESSMENT OF CAPABILITIES**

A critical aspect regarding training is personal assessment of capabilities. These assessments lead to attendance of additional courses and provide needed feedback to the NSTEP on ways to modify training to better meet the needs of the students. After looking at the survey pool demographics and operational experience, the respondents provided input of their strengths and weaknesses regarding STANAG 2555's basic and advanced intelligence capabilities (see Figures 4 and 5) and the SOFFC's F3EA-D cycle (see Figure 7). The rating scale provided the respondents a range from 1, strongly disagree, to 7, strongly agree on their assessment of being able to fulfill the tasks, functions, and roles asked in the survey. Table 2 provides a graphical range for the survey population's responses.

Strongly Disagree	Neutral			Strongly Agree		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Table 2. Rating Scale Used in Survey

### 1. Skillsets

First, the respondents provided their assessments on their ability to exploit various intelligence disciplines that they would be required to analyze during operations. These disciplines included Open Source, SIGINT, IMINT, and HUMINT. The input provided indicates that average responses marginally agree with the respondents' ability to utilize information from these disciplines (Table 3). These four intelligence disciplines provide the most common sources of information to support operations.

"I feel that my training and professional experiences has prepared me to conduct the following missions"	INTEL Student Sample
Exploit Open Source Information	5.00
Exploit SIGINT information	4.91
Exploit IMINT information	5.06
Exploit HUMINT information	5.66

Source: NATO SOF INTEL Survey 2012, C. Vores

Table 3. Views on Skillset Capabilities

### 2. Functions

The respondents were next asked a series of questions regarding their ability to provide intelligence support to the typical operations that SOF organizations conduct. The four supported mission types questioned are inherent

SOF operations, conducted throughout the spectrum of conflict.<sup>60</sup> As Table 4 illustrates, the respondents indicated that they marginally agreed with their ability to provide intelligence support to MA, DA, SR, and COIN operations.

"I feel that my training and professional experiences has prepared me to conduct the following missions"	INTEL Student Sample
Intelligence Support to Military Assistance (MA)	5.47
Intelligence Support to Direct Action (DA)	5.78
Intelligence Support to Special Reconnaissance (SR)	5.63
Intelligence Support to Counter-Insurgency (COIN)	5.53

Source: NATO SOF INTEL Survey 2012, C. Vores

Table 4. Views on Function Capabilities

### 3. Roles

The last section for capability self-assessments was to identify the respondents' ability to fill critical roles and positions within an intelligence support element or organization. These roles and responsibilities fall in line, generally, with individuals in section, cell, or organization leadership positions. As with the other areas regarding self-assessment, the respondents marginally agreed with their ability to provide management and oversight of these roles (see Table 5).

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<sup>60</sup> North Atlantic Treaty Organization AJP-3.5 "Allied Joint Doctrine for Special Operations," 2009, 1–2.

"I feel that my training and professional experiences has prepared me to conduct the following missions:"	INTEL Student Sample
Oversee Intelligence Production	5.77
Oversee Targeting Process (Kinetic and Non-Kinetic)	5.53
Oversee Collection Management	5.47

Source: NATO SOF INTEL Survey 2012, C. Vores

Table 5. Views on Role Capabilities

## F. INSTRUCTOR ASSESSMENTS OF STUDENT CAPABILITIES

The last two questions of this survey focused on perceptions, observations, and assessments of the students by NSTEP instructors and were presented in an open-ended format. Six instructors provided input to these two questions and the responses indicate that a large portion of students arrive for training with a limited understanding of the intelligence discipline. One instructor responded that a large number of students attend the intelligence courses as operations officers that will be, or newly assigned to intelligence positions. These individuals bring a wealth of operational knowledge and the clear understanding what tactical elements need to complete successful missions, but lack the basic understanding of analysis.

Another instructor's response indicates that the course prerequisites for students are not always met, placing attendees at a significant disadvantage. This issue limits the input into class discussions and participation, forcing the instructor to focus more time attempting to educate those with minimal experience. This instructor further explained that students with the lack of previous training and deployment experience have issues during practical exercises, especially during the advanced intelligence course.

## **G. SUMMARY**

The overall purpose of this survey was to identify personal strengths of NSTEP students regarding the assessments of their intelligence application skillsets. The responses provided from the survey pool illustrated that these students did retain a level of comfort to conduct the required tasks to provide intelligence support to SOF elements conducting full spectrum operations. This information is critical for both the units that provide these students and the instructors at the NSTEP. The positive feedback from students will likely increase due to a continuously updated training curriculum that provides instruction of the latest information and intelligence processes. The NSTEP as a whole can use this feedback to incorporate new training material based on lessons learned from personal experience and current operations.

The intent of this survey was to reach out to a significant pool of current and former students of the NSTEP. Although the response was only 18%, the demographics provided a broad sample regarding rank, years of service, and military career paths. The initial assessment is that the NATO SOF partners use the NSTEP to round out and update existing training. In some instances, the training the NSTEP provides serves as the only instruction some intelligence personnel receive. Two respondents provided additional comments regarding Intelligence Officer Career development stating that within their militaries, there is no intelligence officer branch, but intelligence positions that are filled once or twice over a soldier's career. During these circumstances, the NSTEP fills the critical role in training these personnel to assume their duties as SOTU and SOTG staff intelligence officers.

In order to reach out to as many potential subjects as possible, the researcher presented an overview of this research to four courses in session over a five-day visit to Mons, Belgium. Additional assistance was provided by the NSHQ J2 shop, who maintains former student databases. These databases provided e-mail contacts for these former students in an effort to reach out to a larger pool of subjects. As previously stated in this chapter, only 6 surveys were

conducted on site and the remaining 27 were completed online. The lack of in-person surveys is assessed to be due to anonymity of the survey participants. This survey additionally provided participants the opportunity to add personal comments along with their selections to various questions. Although a limited number of participants provided additional comments, the few that were provided added insight to NSTEP attendance and the likely impressions that NATO SOF partners had of the training delivered.

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## **VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. SUMMARY**

The beginning of this thesis discussed the critical need for the development of intelligence capabilities for NATO SOF operations. Both of these chapters identified potential gaps in training and provided models on the types of intelligence organizations. The importance of SOF intelligence within these two chapters was emphasized based on the sensitivity of the operations conducted by these elite units as well as the needed training that supports these activities. Chapter One discussed the issue of new, and partially trained, intelligence personnel assigned to critical positions within the SOF intelligence strata as being a common occurrence. Due to the nature of career progression, this is the process within many of NATO SOF organizations.

Chapter Three provided a case study on the ISAF SOF Fusion Cell. This cell led the way for intelligence support in Afghanistan, and helped to develop the NSTEP training curriculum. This organization has grown, not only in personnel, but in its capabilities and functions as a leading intelligence support organization in the Afghan theater. In this growth, the requirements levied on the SOFFC have provided the opportunity for the NSTEP to earn the reputation as a foundation in NATO SOF training.

Next, this research dissected the NSTEP curriculum and provided a concise overview the F3EA-D process. This targeting process, feedback from assessments and from deployments, has driven the development of courses that best meet the requirements for supporting NATO SOF operations. This evolution in training has afforded many NATO SOF personnel to attend cutting edge training on a multitude of disciplines that are geared for both the operator and the intelligence professional.

The following chapter of this research offered an explanation into the framework of the NSTEP training describing it as a foundation and finishing

school. The concept of this thesis was to examine the need of a mid-career intelligence officer's course that provides validation to NATO SOF officers. The growth of the NSTEP has allowed NATO SOF personnel the opportunity to offer lessons learned from operational deployments and reap the benefits of ongoing updated training. This cycle not only benefits the students that attend the training, but NSHQ, as a whole, has the ability to modify and update doctrine as needed. The NSHQ J2 directorate has the mission of defining the intelligence process, improving current competences, establishing future information exchange requirements, and identifying future ISR capability requirements.<sup>61</sup> The multinational makeup of this directorate and the direct input of the J2 into the NSTEP facilitate this mission. As the J2 directorate continues to meet the objectives of the focus areas, the NSTEP training curriculum continues growing to meet the new challenges that NATO SOF will face in the future.

Additionally, this research provides insight into NSTEP history and considers its future capabilities. In order to meet the growing global interests of NATO SOF and to counter threats, the NSTEP has developed a road map to grow the needed intelligence personnel to meet these challenges. The NSTEP has provided a recommended, three phased approach to grow NATO SOF Intelligence professionals (see chapter IV.C.). This training outline provides a clear roadmap for NATO SOF partners to validate the progression of their intelligence personnel. This model also outlines the expansion of their collective capability from the SOTU up to the SOTG level of commands. Commands that do not take the opportunity to spread training across the entire unit limit the overall capability of the units placing the majority of the workload on fewer soldiers.

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<sup>61</sup> NSHQ, "NSHQ J2, SOIB, and SOFFC: And the Formation of the NSHQ Special Operations Component Command," May 2012, 3.

## B. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE TRAINING

When comparing NATO SOF Intelligence Officers to U.S. Army Intelligence Officers, the requirements, needed skillsets, and characteristics are not different. The U.S. Army Military Intelligence Captain Career Course (MICCC) is a 20 week curriculum that prepares intelligence officers to lead soldiers and civilians in directing, collecting, processing, producing, and disseminating intelligence.<sup>62</sup> U.S. Army Intelligence Officers are required to be versatile and exhibit confidence of the multi-intelligence disciplines. Additionally, Intelligence Officers must be able to communicate and integrate products from each of the disciplines into their own intelligence products. By doing this, the intelligence officer is able to provide a clear and coherent picture for the commander and decision makers.<sup>63</sup>

The three-phased intelligence training approach of the NSTEP that has been covered is a valid model in developing NATO SOF intelligence officers. The total time that is required to complete all three phases is approximately 17 weeks, covering eight separate courses. These eight courses provided the needed skillsets that intelligence personnel receive to support NATO SOF operations, but lack the management and staff training that is necessary for overseeing and driving full spectrum intelligence operations.

To be more effective staff officers, intelligence officers should also attend some non-intelligence focused courses offered by the NSTEP. The Special Operations Component Command (SOCC) Staff Course is a one week course that establishes the student's foundation for doctrine, terminology, and staff processes associated with working in a SOF component command headquarters.<sup>64</sup> The SOCC Planning course is the second course that provides

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<sup>62</sup> Center for Army Lessons Learned, "Military Intelligence Captain Career Course," <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/call/thesaurus/toc.asp?id=36262>, (assessed 4 September 2012).

<sup>63</sup> Department of the Army. *Pamphlet 600-3 "Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management."* Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 2010, 241.

<sup>64</sup> NSTEP website, <http://www.nshq.nato.int/NSTEP/>.

this critical staff training. This course is focused on the staff officers that will fill planning positions within a SOF component command and the process associated with the commander's planning requirements for his staff. These two courses add an additional three weeks to the initial three phased intelligence training regimen, bringing the total training time to 20 weeks.

## **C. IMPLEMENTING A NEW TRAINING PIPELINE**

### **1. EXISTING TRAINING CURRICULUM**

The NSTEP possesses the needed courses to provide a validation for a NATO SOF Intelligence officer. Although partner countries have an intelligence career branch, survey results indicate that a large percentage of NATO SOF Intelligence officers begin their career as operators, or another branch. These students use the courses at the NSTEP to develop and enhance their intelligence skill sets and to prepare for deployments.

### **2. A PROPOSED TRAINING TIMELINE**

In order to create a validation course that will provide credentialed NATO SOF Intelligence Officers, NSHQ and the NSTEP can take the existing courses and modify the timeline to encompass the needed requirements and skillsets training. Using the existing courses and creating two new courses, the NSTEP would be able to provide credential producing curriculum. In order to achieve this task, the NSTEP courses can be broken down by functions and taught over a four month period. These functional blocks will provide staff training, core skillset training, specialized skillset training, exploitation skillset development, and advanced skillset development.

#### **a. *Staff Training Block***

To achieve this curriculum development, the first block of training; staff training, establishes a foundation for personnel that have never served as staff officers. This block should include the two existing NSTEP courses; the Staff Officer's Course and the Staff Planner's Course. A third, future course, would

cover the staff officer's writing requirements. This course would cover the orders production, as well as the additional documentation such as the production of an intelligence estimate. Figure 12 illustrates the course breakdown, over the first two weeks of training. Providing the critical foundation of the roles and responsibilities of being a staff officer is key to the overall success of a commander's staff.

<b><u>STAFF OFFICER TRAINING CURRICULUM</u></b>						
<b>MONTH 1</b>						
WEEK 1	<b>STAFF TRAINING:</b>					
WEEK 1	<b>SOCC STAFF OFFICERS COURSE</b>					
WEEK 2	<b>SOCC PLANNERS COURSE</b>					
WEEK 2	<b>STAFF OFFICERS WRITING COURSE (FUTURE COURSE)</b>					

Source: NATO SOF INTEL Survey 2012, C. Vores

Figure 12. Staff Training Block

***b. Core Skillset Development***

The NATO SOF Intelligence Course has provided a solid foundation for developing analyst capabilities and prepared intelligence staffs for deployments. The NSIC is the basis for the development of the core skillsets for intelligence officers. It offers access to the various databases and software platforms that NATO SOF staffs are currently using to support operations in Afghanistan. The origin of this course dates back to the beginning of the NSTEP training curriculum and is constantly updated to meet the needs of the operational units deployed to various theaters and environments.

Continued emphasis on the importance for students to attend this training allows soldiers new to intelligence to grasp the fundamental skillsets to facilitate operations with thorough analysis and production. This course also takes seasoned intelligence officers and exposes them to multinational environments, providing the opportunities to get “hands on” access to real time, raw information and create actionable intelligence products. The NSIC is the perfect platform and should not be modified in this course of action. Although this course does not provide the management oversight that intelligence leaders need; this course serves as the fundamental building block for this validation (see Figure 13).

<b><u>STAFF OFFICER TRAINING CURRICULUM</u></b>						
<b>MONTH 1</b>						
WEEK 3	<b>CORE SKILLSET DEVELOPMENT:</b> NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE COURSE					
WEEK 4	NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE COURSE					
<b>MONTH 2</b>						
WEEK 5	<b>CORE SKILLSET DEVELOPMENT:</b> NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE COURSE					
WEEK 6	NATO SOF INTELLIGENCE COURSE					

Source: Produced by C. Vores, 2012

Figure 13. Core Skillset Development Block

**c. Specialized Skillset Development**

The current NSTEP courses in the fields of imagery, HUMINT, SIGINT, and targeting develops a track for students. Figure 14 illustrates how this block is planned with the first three weeks concentrating on an overview of these intelligence disciplines, with the final week acting as a summarization of these courses. Although some NATO SOF organizations do not possess all of these disciplines, this exposure prepares students to operate in multinational environments. These training opportunities open doors to expansion of NATO SOF capabilities as a whole. NATO SOF branches out from these capabilities to meet future challenges. Expanding capabilities, additionally, allows for better interoperability when conducting multinational operations, leading to smooth formations of CFSOCC headquarters and other types of NATO SOF organizations.

These courses only provide limited training; therefore additional NSTEP courses must be developed to provide specialized validation for students. These four courses allow an opportunity for students to utilize how these disciplines work together to provide critical information to intelligence. Additionally, students will begin to understand how to incorporate this information into the targeting cycle. Even though most students who attend this training will do so with limited, or no experience, in these fields, these courses will allow these students to see how SIGINT, HUMINT, and IMINT operations are conducted. Then students discover how the three disciplines provide corroborating evidence to find and fix targets on the battlefield.

# **STAFF OFFICER TRAINING CURRICULUM**

## **MONTH 2**

WEEK 7	<b>SPECIALIZED SKILLSET DEVELOPMENT:</b> NATO SOF PRECISION GEO-LOCATION FAMILIARIZATION COURSE	
WEEK 8	NATO HUMINT INTRODUCTORY COURSE	
<b>MONTH 3</b>		
WEEK 9	<b>SPECIALIZED SKILLSET DEVELOPMENT:</b> WARRIOR VIEW INTELLIGENCE TOOL TRAINING	
WEEK 10	NSO NATO Conventional Targeting Course	

Source: Produced by C. Vores, 2012

Figure 14. Specialized Skillset Development Block

### ***d. Exploitation Skillset Block***

Growing emphasis has been placed on exploitation and capturing this information when dealing with prosecution and developing targetable information. The development of this field has given rise to new organizations and focused training in both the Iraqi and Afghan theaters of operations. The two NSTEP courses that provide this critical training are the Cellular Exploitation and the Technical Exploitation Operations Coordinator courses. These courses are geared to both operators and intelligence professionals and illustrate how the exploitation process is conducted and how this information is developed into evidence and intelligence (Figure 15). These two courses can be covered over a

two period, providing the overview and TTPs needed to conduct exploitation operations and the analysis associated with them.

<b><u>STAFF OFFICER TRAINING CURRICULUM</u></b>						
<b>MONTH 3</b>						
WEEK 11	EXPLOITATION SKILLSET DEVELOPMENT:					
WEEK 12	<b>NATO SOF CELLULAR EXPLOITATION COURSE</b>					
<b>NATO SOF TECHNICAL EXPLOITATION OPERATIONS COORDINATOR COURSE</b>						
Source: Produced by C. Vores, 2012						

Figure 15. Exploitation Skillset Development Block

**e. Advanced Skillset Block**

The final phase of this validation curriculum is made up of three training blocks: the TNAC, a future course that highlights intelligence support to military assistance, and a CAPSTONE exercise (Figure 16). The TNAC focuses on the advanced skillsets needed to oversee intelligence processes. Equally important, the TNAC works to conduct the innovative analysis needed to develop intelligence products in an asymmetric battle space. These two new blocks of instruction provide students the opportunity to develop intelligence that supports the information and TTP-sharing process during partner development.

Even though not all NATO SOF organizations maintain an MA role, all that participate in ISAF operations are partnered with some type of Afghan security force during their deployment. This role is critical and must go beyond the tactical training of skillsets. Developing a partner's capability to execute the "find and fix" blocks of the targeting cycle facilitates growth in overall capability of

that partner force. The final block for this proposed curriculum is roleplaying. Allowing the students to fill multiple roles and execute the required intelligence tasks associated with them, enables the students “operate” and lead during potential situations. This provides immediate feedback to both the students and the instructors on strengths and weaknesses. During this exercise, the students must be rotated to ensure that they grasp the training material while furthering the development of their managerial processes.

<b><u>STAFF OFFICER TRAINING CURRICULUM</u></b>						
<b>MONTH 1</b>						
WEEK 13	<b><u>ADVANCED SKILLSET DEVELOPMENT:</u></b>					
WEEK 14	THREAT NETWORK ANALYSIS COURSE					
WEEK 15	INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT DURING MILITARY ASSISTANCE OPERATIONS (FUTURE COURSE)					
WEEK 16	CAPSTONE EXERCISE					

Source: NATO SOF INTEL Survey 2012, C. Vores

Figure 16. Advanced Skillset Development Block

#### **D. POTENTIAL CHALLENGES**

In order for this curriculum to possess the needed accreditation, all of NATO must agree to the value of the course and identify it as an option for training NATO SOF intelligence personnel. If this agreement is not met, the course will not be viewed as a validation producing course, potentially leaving some graduates unqualified by their home countries. An additional challenge of this course is a perceived infringement of career track training of partner nations, without their oversight. From the survey data, many attendees of the NSTEP training routinely fill staff positions as part of their career progression. On occasion, these duties can lead an individual down a different career path. However, in most cases, this duty is temporary and encompasses only one to two years.

Another potential setback for NATO SOF partners is the amount of time spent away during training. This absence leaves a critical position unmanned for a significant period of time. The length of training and the short term assignment could persuade NATO SOF partners to continue to use the NSTEP's individual course menu. Some NATO SOF commands will likely continue to send their intelligence soldiers to one or two short courses based on unit OPTEMPO and section strength. This action will provide these individuals the needed tools to effectively support their commanders, but will lack the multidiscipline training.

#### **E. WAY AHEAD FOR INTELLIGENCE TRAINING**

The NSTEP has all of the tools needed to develop a mid-career intelligence officer's course that provides an accreditation to the students. These courses cover the specific areas of study to provide overview of multisource intelligence and staff operations. To complete this curriculum, the NSTEP must develop additional training that covers written products and intelligence support to military assistance. These two new courses will provide training and exposure in areas that are difficult to master and learned on the job during deployments.

The ability to bring together staff officers from various nations to build a combined NATO SOF command can be a difficult task. By establishing this curriculum, NSHQ will be able to provide a complete training package and certification to NATO SOF intelligence officers. This endorsement and training will facilitate interoperability when NATO SOF is called on to conduct operations in the future. The need to operate in a multinational environment has been tested for the last eleven years—providing a common training pipeline is the step needed to further NATO SOF's success.

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